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Students donate art work as service-learning project and gift to the community

Summary: Paintings of Morris scenes will be available for viewing and for sale by bids at the Common Cup coffeehouse. Proceeds will be donated to Stevens County Human Services.

(November 9, 2009)-For the past four years, students have combined their knowledge and love of art with a service-learning project for the community. This year, students in Associate Professor of Studio Art Michael Eble's painting courses are creating Morris [townscapes](#), capturing scenes from throughout the community. Their work will be hung in the Common Cup coffeehouse, downtown Morris. The board of the nonprofit coffeehouse will choose one painting for its permanent collection, and the remaining paintings will be sold to the highest bidder from the community. The proceeds collected from the art sale will be donated to Stevens County Human Services to help young people from the community.

"The project came about because Common Cup requested a painting from our students," shares Eble. "But, instead of simply donating one painting, we felt this was an opportunity to support a local charity, which fits the mission of the coffeehouse. The students had a great discussion with [managers] Rose and Sue at the Common Cup about which charity they wanted to support, and we continued that dialogue in class. Ultimately, the students chose to support young people in the community who might not have the same opportunities as their peers."

Art student Samantha Vankrevelen, Coon Rapids, has been involved with this year's and previous year's service-learning arts projects. "The community is very good about letting us know they appreciate our work," she states, "I am very excited to see the response to our project this year."

The paintings will be available for viewing and bidding at Common Cup on Tuesday, November 17, 2009, with a special viewing on Thursday, November 19 during the Parade of Lights evening. At the closing reception on Thursday, December 10, from 5 until 7 p.m., the student artists will be available to talk about their work and members of the community will have a final opportunity to bid on the paintings before the winners are announced.

Argie Manolis, coordinator of the Office of Community Engagement, said that service-learning projects like these help students to think about how their talents can be used to support the community. "We know there's an increased need for families to make ends meet in this economic climate," she said. "I'm glad the students were interested in getting involved in a project like this one."

Students who will be contributing their art work to the service-learning project include: Michelle Leedahl, Glenwood, Samantha Vankrevelen, Coon Rapids, Rebekah Ackerman, Andover, Deborah Covart, Ramsey, Lacey Granroos, Fridley, Kayla Hagen, Minnetonka, Ashley Harris, Ely, Sara Lahr, Sauk Centre, Susan Robertson, Apple Valley, Janelle Simones, Cottage Grove, and Ashley Splonskowski, Madison.

Photos below: Students in Eble's painting class work on their Morris townscape paintings for the service-learning project.

Susan Robertson '11, Apple Valley, art history and anthropology major

Michelle Leedah '10, Glenwood, studio art major

Debbie Covart '10, Ramsey, studio art major

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